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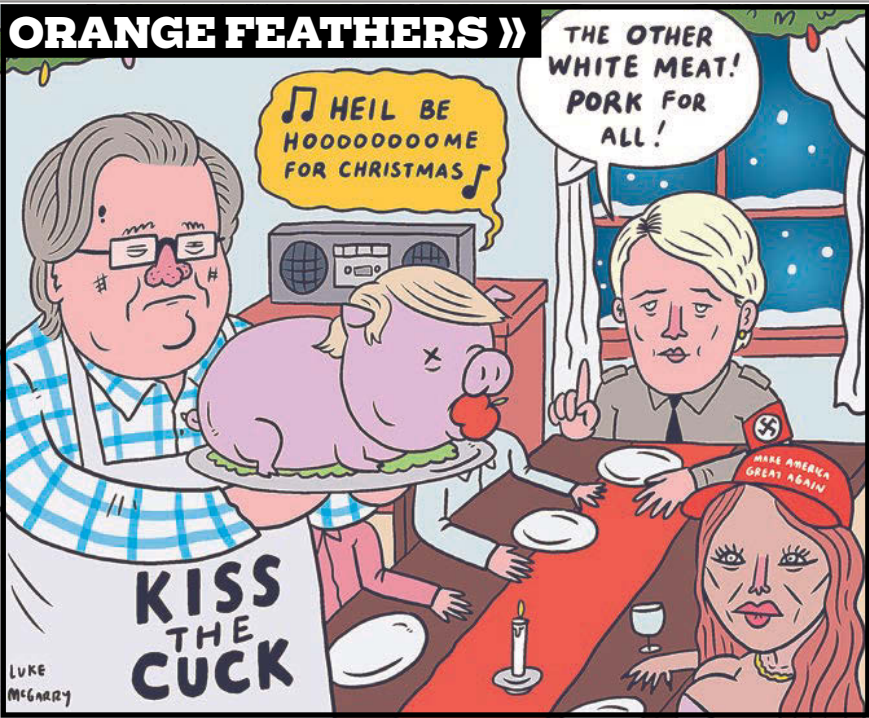
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Time for Sheriff Hutchens to Go

Hired to bring dignity back after the Mike Carona disaster, OC's top law person just brought more shame

Campaigning to become the sheriff of Orange County in 1998, Mike Carona overcame résumé shortcomings from a glorified bailiff's job by presenting himself as a law-enforcement reformer with squeaky-clean instincts and an appreciation of investigative journalism. Carona cold-called the *Weekly* a year earlier to praise my criticism of Mike Capizzi, the then-district attorney who promised he'd share grand jury transcripts of how Merrill Lynch slyly profited from the

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»R. SCOTT MOXLEY

county's \$1.6 billion bankruptcy before deciding to conceal the record. A decade later, Carona found himself indicted by a federal grand jury for corruption that earned him a 66-month prison term. He'd named Don Haidl—a wealthy, booze-guzzling, foul-mouthed Rancho Cucamonga used-car salesman without a minute of police training—as an assistant sheriff at a department with 4,500 employees and an annual budget topping \$600 million. At the sheriff's corruption trial, Haidl explained he'd grabbed the No. 2 spot by handing Carona bundles of cash, flying him around California in his private plane, picking up bar tabs, paying for custom-made suits and Las Vegas casino excursions, and dining him on his Newport Beach-based yacht.

Carona's successor, Sandra Hutchens, was expected to be the antidote for an agency that employed numerous outstanding deputies but had become an ethical swamp because of leadership failures. County officials felt palpable relief, thinking the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) couldn't sink any lower because, at the very least, everyone knew she wouldn't be trolling bars, looking for easy chicks while on duty or sending subordinates greeting cards referring to her anatomical "Little Sheriff." During a career at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Hutchens rose through the ranks, despite a controversial 1980 lethal shooting that forced taxpayers to pay the dead man's family \$1.4 million. She eventually served as LA Sheriff Lee Baca's executive assistant and chief of his Office of Homeland Security. (Baca resigned two years ago and is currently facing federal corruption charges.) Winning the 2008 OC Board of Supervisors' appointment to finish Carona's term, Hutchens guaran-

teed she'd restore public trust. She also promised to fire deputies caught lying to cover up corruption. In her rookie year, she told me she expected journalists to hold her accountable, observing, "People—deputies and the public—depend on me to do the right thing."

Time has proven Hutchens' assertions shallow. During her administration, irrefutable evidence emerged, detailing how OCSD conducted unconstitutional scams with confidential informants to secretly help District Attorney Tony Rackauckas win cases. Deputies who've committed perjury on the witness stand and hidden or destroyed evidence—even in death-penalty cases—have gone unpunished. For 201 weeks, this sheriff has not fully complied with discovery orders by Superior Court Judge Thomas M. Goethals in *People v. Scott Dekraai*. Ponder the audacity of Hutchens pontificating righteously while spending more than 33,840 hours telling a judge she is genuinely searching for the requested agency records in what is infamously known across the nation as the Orange County jailhouse-snitch scandal. Weeks ago, a frustrated Goethals asked the sheriff's lawyers in the County Counsel's office when he could "expect compliance" and received the bureaucratic equivalent of a non-answer.

Dec. 5 saw the latest embarrassment for Hutchens; Goethals gave reporters access to 242 pages from a long-hidden "Special Handling Log" documenting OCSD inmate movements, department "capers" and snitch activities from 2008 to 2013. Many entries are mundane, but others provide insight into various scams deputies ran to illegally obtain evidence against in-custody, pretrial defendants. Records show officers created informant tanks and enticements for snitches to befriend and later question government targets about their charges and defense strategies; planted narcotics and syringes on informants to trick other inmates into believing the rats weren't acting as OCSD agents; shredded evidence tied to high-profile cases without anybody's knowledge; and worked with prosecutors and local police agencies to wire cells with recording devices, evidence that has been largely concealed from defense attorneys.

As I've previously reported, one of the last notes in the log is perhaps the most damning. Written within days of Goethals' January 2013 discovery orders in *Dekraai*, an entry shows deputies suddenly decided after five years to unname the Special Handling Log and to internally label future information as a database no defense lawyer or judge



could identify for discovery orders: an "Important Information Sharing Only" document. The ruse has worked so far. In August, an OCSD spokesman told *Huffington Post's* Matt Ferner that Hutchens doesn't know why the log disappeared, she truly wants to learn what happened and remains baffled about the location of log-type records after the unnamng decision. How many years are needed for a sheriff in a paramilitary outfit to get answers from subordinates?

To Scott Sanders, the assistant public defender who discovered the scandal, Hutchens' antics have grown tiresome. Sanders learned in late 2014 that the department had been hiding from him a records system called TRED, which contains evidence contradictory to law enforcement's narratives in dozens of criminal cases, including *Dekraai*. Then, after last February's inadvertent revelation of a second hidden system, the log, Hutchens claimed those records, which were stored on OCSD computers by on-duty deputies, weren't official and, therefore, shouldn't be surrendered. When the judge hinted in August he would not likely seal all 1,157 pages of the log from public consumption, the sheriff flip-flopped, arguing the database was critical to daily jail operations, that mayhem and murders would result if discovered, and that she was entitled to an official government-information "privilege" to keep it secret. Her tap-dancing didn't impress Goethals or the California Court of Appeal.

As journalists thumbed through the log on Dec. 5, Hutchens issued a defensive press statement stringing together irrelevant facts and duplicitous omissions to appear conscientious. The sheriff labeled her lengthy failure to obey Goethals as a

"methodical and coordinated endeavor" to be helpful. "The members of OCSD and my leadership team remain committed to searching for and providing documents that are responsive to discovery requests and subpoenas," she claimed.

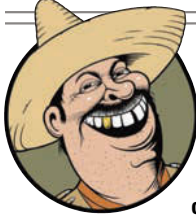
Hutchens also asserts the scandal prompted OCSD reforms. For example, she dissolved the Special Handling Unit and, in September, launched the Custody Intelligence Unit, which, among numerous tasks, will manage informants. At least the sheriff is no longer lying about the existence of her agency's C.I. program. In one effort to derail scandal revelations in the early days, she had Sergeant Brent Benson send Goethals a sworn declaration that Sanders' subpoena for snitch-related evidence sought nonexistent material. Benson wrote on Aug. 27, 2014, "Upon information and belief, the Orange County Sheriff's Department has no responsive records... because there is no jailhouse-informant program." Wisely without swearing under oath, Hutchens made identical false statements as late as February.

I'm not certain if Carona and Hutchens entered office predisposed to corruption. Maybe the job naturally warps good people by giving them control over state-backed power; massive budgets; thousands of armed, saluting employees; high-tech spy equipment galore; helicopters and planes; plus access to ultra-wealthy businessmen seeking friendships. Whatever the answer, it's time for this failed sheriff to go.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

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ask a mexican!»



DEAR MEXICAN:
Sooooo... your boy
René Redzepi is mov-
ing to Mexico. I'm curi-
ous to hear your thoughts.
From Lagos

DEAR LOCO: Unless the acclaimed Danish chef behind the world-acclaimed Noma is into *tambo-razo* and Antonio Aguilar, he ain't my *compa*. But the Scandinavian very well could be nowadays: It was recently announced he's opening a pop-up Mexican restaurant in Yucatán, charging an extraordinary \$600 per head. So much to unpack here, ¿qué no? Redzepi is the latest *gabacho* to fall in love with Mexican food—and the latest to get media attention for his love of Mexican food, while Mexican chefs get ignored—when the fuck is the culinary press going to go on late-night pho runs with Carlos Salgado of Orange County's Taco María, which is only the most important Mexican-American restaurant in the United States? The *gringo* is even bringing his entire staff from Europe to man the restaurant. Local talent? According to *The New York Times*, the Mexi Noma will employ “four local cooks to produce fresh tortillas”—an attempt at “authenticity” that goes back to the earliest days of Mexican food in the United States and is as trite an ethnic marker as a shamrock tattoo on an Irish girl's *nalga*.

That's the Zapata in me. The Benito Juarez in me, however, takes the longer view: another *gabacho* Reconquista-ed by our cuisine. Redzepi has been promising to anyone who'll listen that he wanted to open a restaurant in Mexico, so entranced he is by *nuestra cultura*. And to his credit, Redzepi's partner in the Mexican safari is Rosio Sanchez, Noma's longtime pastry chef who runs a bona fide *taquería* in Copenhagen and is the child of Mexican immigrants. Sanchez was raised in Chicago's Little Village barrio, which gives her more cred than that *pendejo* Rick Bayless by

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

a Mayan minute. So let Redzepi and Sanchez do their *cosa*! If you really want to yell at someone for Noma Mexico's appropriation, yell at foodies and food writers, who'll always focus more on *gaba-chos* doing Mexican food than Mexicans doing Mexican food—and guess what your letter did?

DEAR MEXICAN: As a *güero* crossdresser, I'm jealous that the Mexican cha-chas are so hot. Are they hot for the same reasons Mexican women are hot? Most *güeros* look like middle-aged stockbrokers in dresses, probably because we are, but that's neither here nor there... I'm talking about the *mamacitas*! In Mexican culture, are you either macho or the girlie-girl you've always wanted to be, with no in between?

La Dama Loca

DEAR CRAZY DAME: Transgendered, crossdressing, genderqueer and genderfucking Mexicans have historically looked better than their *gabacho* counterparts because we have better cisgen stereotypes to play with. Men who want to look like *mujeres* (whether transitioning or not) draw upon the spicy *señorita* archetype; many Chicanas I know who are fluid with their gender identity inevitably go the Pendleton or rockabilly look (all credit goes to Morrissey for the latter one). And you're right: Mexican society, despite its historical machismo, has also had a surprisingly tolerant streak for trans folks or flamboyantly LGBT *mariposas*. But that was the catch—you couldn't act “normal,” or you'd risk getting brutalized (and even that Faustian bargain wasn't much protection against homo- and transphobia). I won't make the insult toward *gabacho* crossdressers you did, but I need to end with a joke here, so try this one: Rick Bayless.

ASK THE MEXICAN

at themexican@askamexican.net,
be his fan on Facebook, follow him
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Hey You!

» ANONYMOUS

Adios, Amiga

You are the former friend I recently reconnected with after not speaking to you for three years. Didn't take me long to find out you are still a self-pitying, negative person who thinks the world revolves around your losses and misfortunes. Very ironic that you would tell me I don't understand reality when I work and volunteer with the public and you stay at home, living off the husband's money. Also very ironic that you'd tell me I'm “single-minded” when you're



BOB AUL

the one who bemoans your miscarriages to the point that you alienate friends, but you think of adoption as a last resort for starting a family. Good luck with your entitled attitude. Giving a home to other people's unwanted children is NOT beneath you. Get over yourself. I'm sick of women whose lives revolve around making copies of themselves while ignoring the plight of other children. Glad we unfriended each other.

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to “Hey, You!” c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Cir., Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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Freddy Negrete sat in his dingy cell at LA's Central Juvenile Hall, where he had finally found peace. It was 1968, and his abusive foster parents often tried to beat the half-Mexican out of him. But suburban neighborhoods and schools and fists couldn't whitewash the East LA Chicano out of the 12-year-old. Fed up, Negrete ran away from his foster home until the *jura* caught up. They threw him in a cell with a 16-year-old whom Negrete kept staring at.

It was the first time he was face-to-face with a real Chicano gangster. Negrete had never seen someone so young inked with what were then called “prison-style” tattoos: stark, straight black lines creating ultra-lifelike images that represented heritage, artistry and toughness. Only *vatos locos* dared to wear them.

"I just thought [the tattoos] were so cool," Negrete says.

Once a style exclusive to Chicanos, black and gray tattoos are now taking over the world

by Josh Chesler

The tattoos—now called “black-and-gray” in the industry—had a level of detail and realism not found anywhere else in the tattooing world at the time. Done with hand-made machines from Men’s Central to Theo Lacy, Folsom to El Centro, the style’s fine lines depicted everything from three-dot crosses to sombrero-wearing honeys, from a gang’s name in Old English font to the Virgin of Guadalupe to intricately shaded tableaux straight out of the pages of *Lowrider* or *Teen Angel*. Mainstream tattooers dismissed them as a Chicano thing, even as *gabachos* in Southern California were beginning to notice their barrio beauty.

Before Negrete's first stint in juvie was over, he learned from his cellmate how to construct a makeshift machine by sticking a needle into the melted end of a toothbrush and dipping it in mascara. It served him well in *la vida loca*, as he worked on homies with San Gabriel's *La*

Sangra or fellow inmates in the California Youth Authority's toughest pen, Tamarack. And his early mastery helped Negrete become a pioneer of one of the most unlikely success stories in the art world.

A style once exclusive to Mexican-American toughs, barely 50 years old, is now found just about everywhere on the globe, from Brazil to Russia to Australia to the Middle East to the chest of actor Danny Trejo. The genre is now so removed from its prison origins that most of its wearers don't even associate it with *cholo* culture. "Some people think that bold and brightly colored tattoos are cartoonish, and they want to wear a tattoo that feels more serious," says Evie Yapelli of Show Pigeon Tattoo in Orange. "Capturing that kind of thing in a fine-line black-and-gray piece feels respectful and timeless."

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



MATT CORKILL

One Fine Line » FROM PAGE 9

Negrete's first shop was his apartment in Pico Rivera in the early 1970s. Business was good, but he quickly got word of a rival. "Everyone wanted their tattoos to look like they were done in prison, so there was one shop in East LA that was trying to do the prison-style tattoos," Negrete says. "The work that I saw from most of the guys who worked there just looked like traditional tattoos without the color, but there was this big hype from this guy named Huero. All these guys would come in to my apartment and show me tattoos that Huero did, and he knew what he was doing, so I would do some tattoos on guys and say, 'Now go show Huero these!'"

"Huero" ("white boy" in Mexican Spanish) was Jack Rudy, a former Marine who got his nickname by being the only white guy in Lynwood's barrio. Already a master of black-and-gray, he would soon become a cult figure for his "Rudy girls": big-eyed, big-lipped *rucas* that stood out in a tattooing world still stuck on cartoony pinups.

"I originally saw Freddy's work coming in off the street, and I was really impressed with it," says Rudy. "I would hear stories about him and how he was tattooing here one day and doing this

NEGRETE (LEFT): HALF CHICANO, HALF JEW, ALL CHINGÓN

RUDY (RIGHT): WHAT A HUERO

the next, but I didn't care if he was a gangster because he was that good. As long as he wasn't a dope fiend or in prison, I wanted him on the [Good Time Charlie's] team."

Rudy and veteran biker tattooer Charlie Cartwright opened up the first Good Time Charlie's in East Los Angeles in 1975. They effectively cornered the market on professional "joint-style" tattoos, creating new machines and finer needles so artists could add more detail and further perfect the softer, more realistic art. With Negrete's street fame beginning to rival that of Good Time Charlie's, Rudy sent word to him to stop by so the two could meet.

"My first trip to Good Time Charlie's, I got the cold shoulder from everybody," Negrete says. The first thing he noticed was that one of his designs hung from the walls; it was a *charra* wearing a sombrero and shorts. No one believed he was the creator until Negrete pulled the original drawing from his notebook. But Cartwright kept to biker culture's then-bigoted code and refused to hire a Chicano, no matter how stellar his artwork. (Nowadays, the two get along just fine.)

"Then Good Time Charlie became a Christian and sold the shop to Ed Hardy [yes, *that* Ed Hardy], and Jack told Ed Hardy about me," Negrete says. "Ed Hardy realized he needed to get someone who could relate to all of the Chicano people in there, so Jack sent word to me again."

Rudy and Negrete worked side by side under Hardy's demanding eye until the two parted ways in 1980. Negrete became involved with everything from drugs and alcohol to religion to academia before rededicating himself to black-and-gray tattoos in the 1990s. But over the years, he had kept in touch with Rudy, who opened Good Time Charlie's Tattooland in Anaheim in 1985—"the fourth shop in all of Orange County, and that was a trip."

While Negrete and Rudy were trying to earn a living throughout the 1980s and '90s, their work unknowingly served as the inspiration for a generation of young artists in Southern California. Black-and-gray—



ERAN RYAN



© 1984, JACK RUDY

along with other fashion choices of Chicanos—were penetrating youth culture, from the Pendletons and Dickies favored by surf bros to the arched eyeliner and faux *chola* tattoos of Gwen Stefani.

This mainstreaming was crucial. Black-and-gray was historically anathema to traditional tattooists, as colorful American traditional designs had dominated the industry since World War II. Racial dynamics, though never openly discussed, created de facto segregation: white guys got "regular" tattoos, while black-and-grays were for Mexicans.

But a new wave of tattooers didn't care for the industry's past rivalries. "By the time I was, like, 15 or 16 years old, there was a small group of us who had all been influenced by guys like Freddy Negrete, Mark Mahoney and Jack [Rudy]," says Big Gus, who created the now-iconic "Fallen Angel" design of a tattooed woman in *Día de los Muertos* makeup and angel wings and starred on Spike TV's *Tattoo Nightmares*. "We were, like, this small group of individuals who would get together and just look at one another's work. We just wanted to take black-and-gray to another level."

What started as only a handful of artists—some known primarily by their nicknames, including Jose "Boxer" Lopez of Anaheim—quickly grew into a dozen. Instead of devolving into cliques, everyone contributed something different to the art form, be it a twist on a technique, an iconic



ERAN RYAN

design or a tidbit of information taken from a tattooer with more experience.

Anaheim native Steve Soto is one of the godfathers of modern black-and-gray, particularly the smooth, more linear flow seen in many artists' work today. But 15 years ago, Soto (who now runs Goodfellas Tattoo Studio in Orange) was a kid looking at the way artists such as Lopez—who was just beginning to get worldwide fame—had begun adding artistic elements such as the use of shadows and light straight out of a Rembrandt. At that time, Soto's only goal was to be as good as the other Anaheim-based tattooers, not thinking it would ever spread too far beyond his city. "People didn't think it was possible before," he says.

"When I first started, there were the few years that I called the glory years," say Franco Vescovi of Vatican Studios in Lake Forest. "The closest shop south was Laguna Tattoo, and after that, it was Oceanside, and the closest shops north were all the shops in Anaheim. It was great. We used to be busy all the time."

In the early 2000s, black-and-gray went from getting mainstreamed to helping to normalize tattoo culture. By the time *Miami Ink* brought the art form into every suburban living room across the country in 2005, Vatican Studios was just as important of a shop as Good Time Charlie's.

Slowly, many of the elite black-and-gray tattooers began to migrate down the 405 from Los Angeles and into the South Bay

and OC to capitalize on eager clients. Carlos Torres—now as identified with black-and-gray as Rudy and Negrete—runs San Pedro's Timeline Gallery. Lopez has Low-rider Tattoo Studios in Fountain Valley. Tim Hendricks is now the head honcho at Fullerton's Classic Tattoo, and Big Gus recently opened up Collective Ink Gallery in Garden Grove.

Soon, the best artists were invited across the world for conventions and seminars on colorless work. Soto recently returned from tattooing in Israel, while Torres just got back from a convention visit to Mexico. "The fact that all of this stuff was kind of looked down upon back then compared to now, when you can have a painting hanging in some museums, is surreal," Torres says. "It almost brings a tear to the eye just because we

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



MATT CORKILL

TOP: SOTO WITH SOME OF HIS ANGELS

RIGHT: VESCOVI REFLECTS ON HIS "GLORY YEARS"

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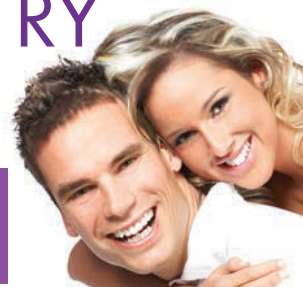
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MATT CORKILL

that'll freak people out.

One of the masters of horror black-and-gray is Bob Tyrrell, a Michigan native who works out of West Hollywood's Shamrock Social Club alongside Negrete and Collective Ink Gallery with Big Gus any time there's snow on the ground in the Midwest. After spending about 15 years pursuing heavy-metal dreams, Tyrrell realized that his artistic talents and love of all things rock & roll made him a perfect candidate to be a tattooer. He began at the age

of 34 and learned a world-class black-and-gray skill set from Midwestern tattooing hero Tom Renshaw before becoming enamored with the beautifully terrifying style of New York City's Paul Booth.

He's nowadays named alongside Booth as the best horror inksters around. But Tyrrell loves working in Southern California and learning from the OG masters. "I'm always trying to come up with something new, and I think everybody out here has such a distinct style that you know it before you even see the name on it," Tyrrell says. I think there's really something you can learn from so many people out here."

One of the most common debates in tattoo shops these days—and yet another influence of black-and-gray—has to do with the tools of the trade. Coil machines have been the standard for professional tattooers for decades because of tradition and durability, but thanks largely to Vescovi's company, Bishop Rotary, rotary machines are rising in popularity because of the ubiquity of black-and-gray. Their intricate construction and price point—a rudimentary one starts around \$400—is far removed from the sewing needle Negrete poked into a melted toothbrush almost a half-century ago.

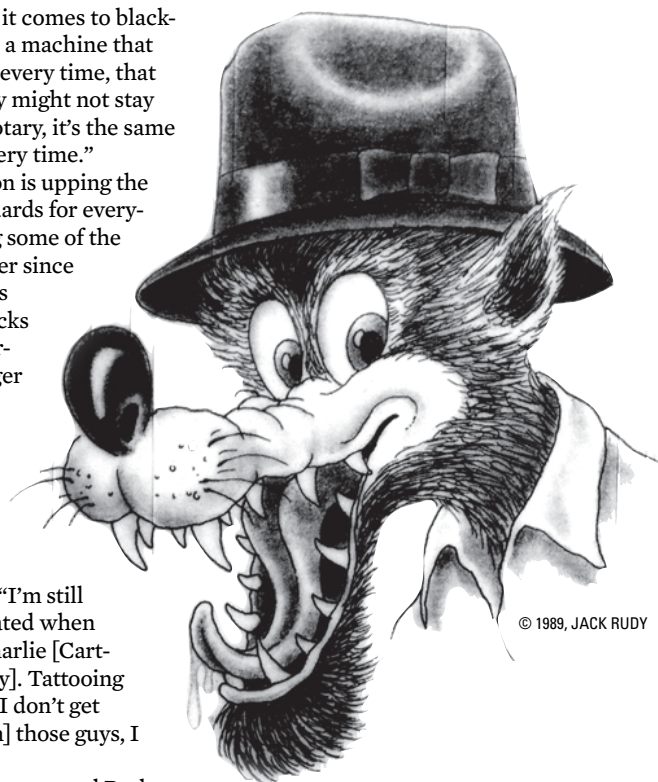
"Rotaries and coils are like Macintosh and PCs," Vescovi explains. "People who make rotaries are like Steve Jobs; they made a machine that's easier to just work. You don't have to worry about if it

doesn't work. When it comes to black-and-gray, if you have a machine that doesn't hit the same every time, that lightest shade of gray might not stay in the skin. With a rotary, it's the same amount of torque every time."

This modernization is upping the black-and-gray standards for everyone. Negrete is doing some of the best work of his career since making the conscious effort to learn the tricks of people such as Torres, even if the younger artist is still in such awe of Negrete that he can barely get a sentence out. "To actually finally meet Freddy was kind of like meeting a hero," Torres says. "I'm still really, really intimidated when I talk with him or Charlie [Cartwright] or Jack [Rudy]. Tattooing celebrities and stuff, I don't get star-struck, but [with] those guys, I get star-struck."

It's a popularity Negrete and Rudy never imagined back in their East LA days. "There are a lot of good tattoos happening out there, but there are a lot of people putting on shit tattoos, too," Rudy says from one of the many plush chairs in the boardroom of Sullen Art Collective's new Seal Beach headquarters.

Negrete is more charitable.



"Some people say, 'Oh, you're a legend!' but I don't see myself that way," he says. "Guys like Carlos Torres and Nikko Hurtado, they're the new legends. I'm trying to keep up with them."

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fri/12/09

[DANCE]

* VISIONS OF SUGAR PLUMS

The Nutcracker

Enjoy the timeless grandeur and tradition upheld by American Ballet Theatre (ABT) and its annual staging of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's masterful *The Nutcracker*. Performed at Segerstrom Hall, this production invites you into Clara's world, then whisks you off to the wonderful fantasy world of the land of sweets, decadently danced to Alexei Ratmansky's choreography under Kevin McKenzie's vivid artistic direction. Each night features different stars, with tonight's headlining performers being Herman Cornejo and San Pedro's own Misty Copeland, the first African-American principal dancer in ABT's legacy. This is not to be missed!

The Nutcracker at Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787; www.scfta.org. 7 p.m. Through Dec. 18. \$29-\$189. —AIMEE MURILLO

[ART]

Going Rogue 'Son of Skywalker'

The Force is strong with this free art show, which is not quite as light and fluffy as what you'll see at some of the other Jedi-pandering galleries. For us Sith Lords and Imperial Officers, Artists Republic's "Son of Skywalker: Imperial Uprising" exhibit is a great way to gear up for the Empire's sure victory in *Rogue One*. Since no holiday season would be complete (for the next handful of years, at least) without lightsaber battles or the festive destruction of X-Wings at the hands of TIE fighters, entrust some of the area's finest artists to re-create the Dark Side's most glorious victories.

"Son of Skywalker: Imperial Uprising" at Artists Republic, 1175 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 988-0603; artists-republic.com. Noon. Through Dec. 31. Free. —JOSH CHESLER

sat/12/10

[FOOD & DRINK]

Good Tidings and Beer Brew Ho Ho

The Christmas tree isn't the only thing getting lit this year—which will be well-evidenced at the annual OC Brew Ho Ho. With unlimited 2-ounce tastings of seasonal and holiday beers from about 40 different breweries, this merry gathering has all the makings of the ultimate Christmas party: free-flowing booze, live music from Dead Man's Party (an excellent Oingo Boingo tribute band), a mountain of meat-centric

food including gourmet burgers and hot dogs, plus hundreds of fully grown adults dressed in ridiculously festive gear taking photos with Santa. In a word: magical.

Brew Ho Ho Holiday Ale Festival at Phoenix Club, 1340 S. Sanderson Ave., Anaheim, (714) 563-4166; www.ocbrewhoho.com. Noon. \$20-\$55. —ERIN DEWITT

[ART]

Give Some Good Art & Fashion Show and Toy Drive

Our cup overfloweth with engaging talent at today's event, where the worlds of art,

fashion, poetry and goodwill intersect. In addition to a bevy of local artists displaying their work, fashion vendors including Audey Thunders Clothing, the Cozmik Fairy and Werd Clothing offer their wares. Simply bring an upwrapped toy for entry, then enjoy performances from the Naranjita Flamenco dancers, open mic poetry featuring SanTana's Violet Cisneros and Anthony Pizarro, and a fashion show with music supplied by DJ Ryan Anthony. Grab some grub from Jav's Barbecue; 100 percent of the night's proceeds benefit local communities.

Second Annual Art & Fashion Show and Toy Drive at Art Castle Studios, 1749 S. Claudina Way, Anaheim; www.facebook.com/frankycastle714. 5 p.m. Free with unwrapped toy. —AIMEE MURILLO

sun/12/11

[THEATER]

Bad Santa

The Eight:

Reindeer Monologues

The twisted truth about Santa Claus is that even *he* couldn't stay off his own naughty list, as evidenced by the testimonials given by his loyal and trusting reindeer in the Chance Theater's production of *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues*. Saint Nick's troop

of sleigh-pullers have a lot to say about the jolly ol' fat man we've come to know and love, and they won't hold back in this uproariously raunchy, mature-audiences-only play. A rotating cast spills the tea every time, so you might want to see it more than once. And maybe think twice about having your kid sit on Santa's lap this year. . . .

The Eight: Reindeer Monologues at the Chance Theater, 5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (888) 455-4212; chance theater.com. 8:30 & 10:30 p.m. Through Dec. 23. \$15-\$35. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FILM]

Deep Throats

All the President's Men

The role of the press during this election year and the forthcoming presidency has never been more integral to our democracy, and with implications of a censored or discounted press never more alarming, this free event offers discussion and insight into the very institution that has ensured our sovereignty. The morning begins with

a screening of Alan J. Pakula's 1976 political thriller *All the President's Men*, based on the Woodward and Bernstein investigation of Watergate, followed by a panel discussion and audience Q&A with moderator Jennifer Fleming, Tim Grobaty, Russ Parsons, Sarah Bennett and Barbara Kingsley-Wilson—journalists and educators with more than 130 years of combined experience.

All the President's Men with Q&A at the Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435; www.arttheatrelongbeach.org. 10:30 a.m. Free. —SR DAVIES

mon/12/12

[FOOD & DRINK]

*** HO, HO, HOPS**
Holiday Paint & Libate

At Phantom Ales in Anaheim, instructor Anna Marcantel will guide your brushstrokes in making a colorful, seasonally appropriate piece of art while you enjoy discounted drinks ranging from meads to ciders to wine to beer on tap. Get even more into the Christmas spirit with goodies, snacks and the chance to win your very own "Dottle" (a handpainted bottle). All materials are included, so reserve your spot early and prepare to ring in some holiday beer—er, cheer.

Holiday Paint & Libate at Phantom Ales, 1211 N. Las Brisas St., Anaheim, (714) 225-3206; holidaypaintandlibate.eventbrite.com. 5 p.m. \$25-\$30.

—AIMEE MURILLO

tue/12/13

[ART]

In the Paint

'Small Works, Big Talent'

The variety of landscapes, still-lives, portraits, surreal creations and watercolor paintings in Las Laguna Gallery's "Small Works, Big Talent" group show share one thing: They adhere to the strict submission guideline that the size of the canvas measure up to 16 inches on any one side. Not only did that rule allow for more paintings to be displayed in the tiny interior space, but it also resulted in the largest exhibition the gallery has hosted. See what artists from all over the world have to share. Good things do come in small packages—or, in this case, canvases.

"Small Works, Big Talent" at Las Laguna Gallery, 577 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 667-1803; www.laslagunagallery.com. 11 a.m. Through Dec. 30. Free.

—AIMEE MURILLO

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wed/12/14



[PETS]

CANDY CANINES

Waggin' Trails Holiday Party

You didn't think the holidays would just sweep by without some sort of dogs-in-costume event, did you? Don your dog in his or her gay apparel for this human-friendly soiree and raise funds for Waggin' Trails Rescue Foundation. You can sip some wine and craft beer while feasting on delectable hors d'oeuvres and desserts from Melody's Bakery. Enter a raffle, bid on the silent-auction items, play games, and enjoy a pet costume contest, showcasing the sweetest fleet of four-legged Santas, elves, snowmen and even an adorable mini Grinch. Most of all, feel secure in knowing you're making the holidays just a little brighter for some pooches in need.

Waggin' Trails Holiday Party at Hilton Waterfront Beach Resort, 21100 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach; www.waggintrailsrescueholidayparty.eventbrite.com. 6 p.m. \$35-\$45. —AIMEE MURILLO

[CONCERT]

Ghoul Gang

The Sea Ghouls, the Bloodhounds and Healing Gems

LA's Bloodhounds were produced by Arthur Alexander from the '80s Sorrows, but really, they sound like the '60s Sorrows, the Downliners Sect or the early Pretty Things, which is tuff, guitar-driven R&B, with harmonica, organ and no patience for anything but the unfuckwithable fundamentals. Support band Sea Ghouls have a little of the old Growlers in them and some of Australian icons the Scientists, too—they might like surf-y guitar, but they let it breathe, instead of going for the pedal-to-the-metal sound of Agent Orange, et al. It's a nice break, in every sense. Openers Healing Gems are a little mysterious, but mystery works well on this bill. Think of it as akin to high tide at night—a lotta power you might not see coming.

The Sea Ghouls, the Bloodhounds and Healing Gems at the Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe, Fullerton; continentalroomoc.com. 9:30 pm. Free. 21+. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

thu/12/15

[PARADE]

We're On a Boat!

Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade

What more California-esque Christmas tradition is there than a parade of vessels floating along the coastline? Now in its 108th year (!!!), the Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade features hundreds of yachts, boats, kayaks, dinghies and canoes decked out in their best seasonal displays as they sail across Newport Harbor. Enjoy a good view of this cheery boat show from anywhere on Balboa Island, Lido Isle or Balboa Peninsula. Friendly tip: Bring blankets, warm attire and folding chairs for optimal comfort, and arrive early for the best parking!

Newport Beach Christmas Boat Parade in Newport Harbor, Newport Beach; www.christmasboatparade.com. 6:30 p.m. Through Dec. 18. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO



[CONCERT]

LOST IN LOVE

The Sounds

It's hard to believe it's been more than a decade since the Sounds captured the hearts and minds of indie-rock fans. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of their seminal *Dying to Say This to You*, the band have ventured Stateside, with Maja Ivarsson and company having no qualms about playing that record front-to-back. On top of that slice of nostalgia, the band have been performing "Thrill," their first new song since 2013. With a new album presumably on the way, this tour confirms that the Swedish quintet isn't afraid to look back while keeping an eye on the future.

The Sounds at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. \$25.

—DANIEL KOHN

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12/10 WHICH ONE'S PINK?
(PINK FLOYD TRIBUTE)
12/11 JACKIE GREENE /
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LUNA NEGRA
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2/18 DADA



1/21
MOTHER HIPS



1/22
ERIC JOHNSON



1/26
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1/27
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2/2
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BRIAN FEINZIMER

Hops to It

Rasselbock in Long Beach proves not all sausage-and-beer halls serve sandwiches
BY EDWIN GOEI

Surely you've noticed that the past few years have seen a boom of new German eateries, most of them sausage-and-beer halls. There's even been an honest-to-goodness biergarten built into an actual, well, garden. But have you also noticed that, for the most part, all you could get at these places were sausage sandwiches? It's as if all the new Chinese restaurants in town decided to only serve egg rolls.

A duo of restaurateurs who bucked the sausage sandwich trend five years ago with Wirtshaus in LA has done it again in Long Beach's Bixby Knolls neighborhood. Rasselbock actually serves German dishes—bountiful plates of meat, starch and veggies. There are still sausages—a dozen kinds, in fact—but also schnitzel and spätzle and German potato pancakes.

And if the presence of schnitzel and spätzle isn't ample proof that Bjoern Risse and Bülent Yildirim are actually from Deutschland, take a look at the drink list. No, not the beers—of which there's the usual encyclopedic variety—but the non-alcoholic stuff. You'll not only find Spezi—which is the half-Coke, half-Orange-Fanta blend beloved by Germans (and perhaps only Germans)—but also Apfelsaftschorle, apple juice cut with sparkling mineral water. And then there's the drink that kind of says it all: Karamalz, which is described on the menu as “a German kid's malt beer.”

It's good that everyone, even the underaged, can wash down his or her meal with a malt beverage of some kind. This is still a bar with communal high tops and TVs tuned to sports, after all. Beer is necessary, if not required. And it's not only served

in pints, but also in gigantic steins larger than a 7-Eleven Big Gulp. There's even the option of ordering a boot, which is about quadruple the cost of a pint and the equivalent of drinking an entire 2 liter bottle in one sitting.

But the food here warrants large quantities of pilsners and lagers. This is hearty fare for hearty people. The schnitzel comes in pork, chicken or veal, pounded thin and cocooned in greaseless golden breading. Take the option of dousing your schnitzel in a mushroom cream sauce, and you've got Rasselbock's version of Jägerschnitzel, which is simultaneously light and stick-to-your-ribs. Imagine an ultra-filling, gravy-soaked, Southern, chicken-fried steak but without all the guilt.

The sides you pick for the schnitzels may have something to do with it. There's an airy North German-style potato salad seasoned with only the slightest touch of mayo and mustard. The boiled Brussels sprouts are cooked with wine and garlic; the wine imbues the sprouts with a subtle bitterness that cuts through all oncoming cream and protein, and the garlic is so strong you smell it before you even taste it.

But the side you definitely want is that homemade spätzle, stubby and wiggly egg noodles formed by a potato-ricer, then boiled and dressed in nothing but butter. The uninitiated might think it's mac and cheese missing its cheese, but for those raised on Karamalz, it will taste like something made by *mutter*.

If you're going to have a sausage plate for your meal, make sure to pick one not already on the appetizer platter, which is what you should order as soon as you're

seated. The sampler comes with three of the best sausages Rasselbock offers: the essentials of bratwurst, Käsekrainer (pork sausage embedded with chunks of Emmentaler cheese) and a spicy jalapeño-chicken with mango. Cut into bevels, each piece bursts with juice, the natural casing snapping against your teeth. Dip them in three homemade mustards, ranging from the sticky-sweet to the sinus-clearing. The deviled eggs are also a great appetizer choice, with the yolks formed into perfect domes, then topped with crumbled bacon they probably don't need and a nice garlic aioli they do. The eggs are almost as good for sharing as the tender, bite-sized potato pancakes dolloped with applesauce and mascarpone cheese. One order comes with six, and if you pair that with the sausage sampler and a bowl of the excellent beef goulash, it's already a meal for two.

When you're ready to move on to the actual sausage plates, there's a veritable zoo's worth to pick from: everything from wild boar to duck to buffalo. There are even two vegan sausages. Though a little dry, the chicken curry sausage—packed with cilantro, raisins and roasted shallots—tastes as if it belongs at a Thai restaurant. But as the English have proven with their bangers, fluffy mashed potatoes are the perfect side for any and all of Rasselbock's tubemeats. Buns need not apply.

RASSELBOCK

4020 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, (562) 912-4949; www.rasselbocklb.com. Mon.-Thurs., 4-11 p.m.; Fri., 11 a.m.-midnight; Sat., 9 a.m.-midnight; Sun., 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Meal for two, \$30-\$50, food only. Beer and wine.

HOLE IN THE WALL

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Tamales Redux

TACOS EL YOGI

on the northwest corner of Birch Street and McFadden Avenue, Santa Ana.

A century ago, tamale wagons rolled through the unpaved streets of Orange County, manned by Mexicans selling their steaming treasures to hungry *gabachos*. *Pendejo* council members eventually legislated them out of existence, claiming *tamaleros* sold dirty food, that they drew bad crowds, that they robbed business from brick-and-mortar restaurants, that they didn't pay their fair share of taxes—the same bullshit politicians used against taco trucks until hipsters got into the game. That led to tragedy: Great tamales were no longer available daily to Orange County, and fans had to largely wait until the holidays for Mexicans to get into the masa-wrapping experience.

But a curious thing has happened in SanTana over the past year: Tamale wagons are back! They're popping up in residential neighborhoods, auto shops and industrial parks—even outside of Northgate. And then there's Tacos El Yogi, a bright-yellow trailer that parks Fridays through Sundays outside a house kind enough to put out seating for the crowds. Sometimes, the owners will put a strobe light on the SUV parked in front of it, the better to catch the attention of drivers as they speed down McFadden Avenue; at all times, the SUV hosts a sign proclaiming, “TAMALES OAXAQUEÑOS”—catnip to a city whose Mexican immigrant population has slowly changed over the past decade from *michoacanos* and *chilangos* to people from Southern Mexico.

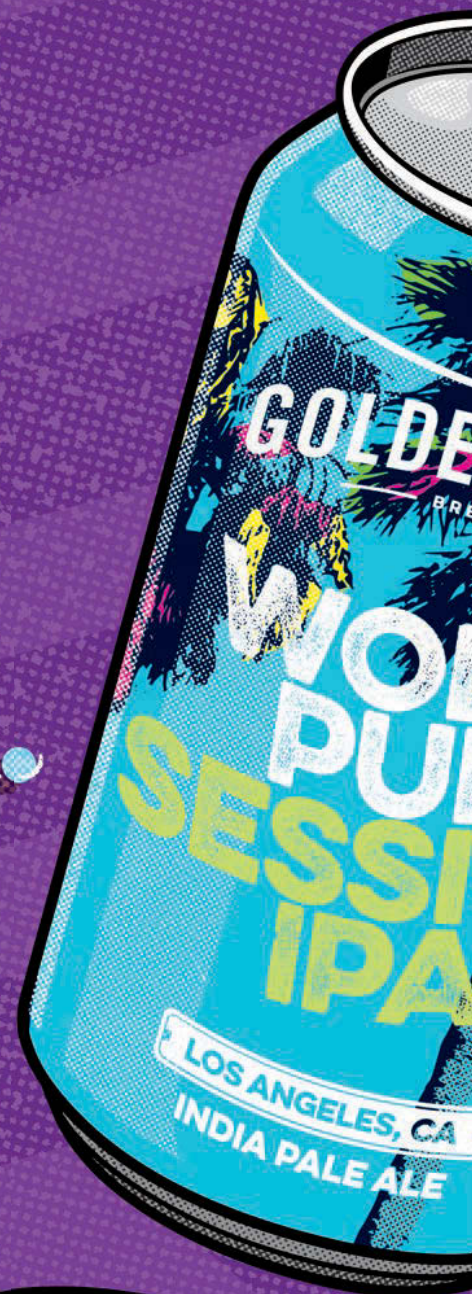
El Yogi does sell tacos, burritos and quesadillas, the better to appeal to the *pocho* homies who inevitably pull up for a late-night bite in their tricked-out Chryslers. But the *paisas* all go for the fabulous tamales, which come wrapped in either corn husks or banana leaves. The former are smaller, spicier and thicker, with the best being the cheesy *rajas con queso*; the latter are mushier but full meals, as best exemplified by the mole negro: nearly half a chicken is in it, slathered in a sweet, spicy sauce. But the best meal is the *guajolota*: your choice of crema-smeared tamale inside a fluffy bolillo—a tamale sandwich! It's a specialty of Mexico City, the equivalent to eating a maternity pillow, and it will cost you a week on the elliptical—but *fuck*, is it *bueno*!

GARELLANO@OCWEEKLY.COM

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ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

Speakeasy Strands

Roasted spaghetti squash carbonara at Ms Alice at Mansion Costa Mesa

When there's a menu item that resembles a healthier version of the original, do you order it to feel good about yourself or scoff at the thought of eating "clean"? That's the dilemma you may encounter with one small plate listing in particular at Ms Alice. But don't be mistaken: This is one indulgent dish.

Roasted squash strands in lieu of pasta intrigues. A little smoked tomato sauce never hurt anyone. And a simple addition of egg—carbonara us already! Yet that's where the health-conscious guidelines end. A hollandaise aioli will be your downfall, laden with richness from ingredients we shall not name. It'll take those proud few

EAT THIS NOW

» ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

calories and tackle them senseless with creamy flavor. You won't know what hit you, and that's fine, because Ms Alice, quietly attached to Mansion Costa Mesa, is where you escape the everyday hustle. Just slip through the keyhole entrance, settle into a couch by the Cheshire Cat, and sip on something spirit-forward as you carbonara.

MS ALICE AT MANSION COSTA MESA
 841 Baker St., Costa Mesa, (714) 549-1250;
mansioncostamesa.com

DRINK OF THE WEEK

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Orange Soda from Contra Coffee & Tea

"I am an orange-soda SNOB!" I roared to Contra Coffee & Tea co-founder Julie Nguyen as she was serving drinks at the recent Patchwork Arts & Craft Festival in SanTana. Really, I'm an orange-drink snob, given I've been drinking OJ since back when you could buy the stuff straight from a packing house and drink it from unlabeled cans. That sparked a lifelong obsession with all *naranja* beverages: Sunkist, Fanta, Sunny Delight, mandarin Jarritos, San Pellegrino, even that vile syrup they sell by the gallon at Stater Brothers, one of which I once drank in about 45 minutes at Anaheim High, then proceeded to vomit across the quad.

And now the Contra kids, makers of a wonderful nitro-powered cold brew, were going to take on my addiction? Nguyen ner-



GUSTAVO ARELLANO

vously laughed as she handed me a cup of their latest creation.

THE DRINK

Perfection: tasted like a melted creamsicle, heavy on the cream part and perfectly tangy. "This is amazing," I announced to no one in particular, "and I say this as an orange-soda SNOB!" Find Contra's Mobile Taproom and ask for a fill-up on a growler or 30. Yeah, there's no alcohol in it—but sometimes, liquid deliverance doesn't need to pickle your liver, you know?

Follow Contra Coffee & Tea on Instagram: @contracoffeeandtea.

#steamedhams

HashTag Burgers in Bixby Knolls makes the old-school foodstuff new for the Instagram generation

At the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Wardlow Road, a bona-fide burger smackdown is in full effect, and it's a doozy. One place is old-school (as in, half a century old), the other brand-new, and the battle between the two reflects a current tipping point in Long Beach's quickly accelerating food scene.

In the southeast corner, we have Dave's World Famous Burgers and Dogs, an 8-foot-by-5-foot shack in the corner of a Chevron parking lot that has been serving the same so-simple-it-works menu since the 1950s. Directly across the street from the Long Beach burger landmark sits HashTag Burgers, a 5-month-old locally owned house of organic meat with modern flare built into its name. HashTag took over for Mustard's, the all-hot-dogs-all-the-time counter that had the only Vienna Beef account for miles. HashTag isn't trying to be fancy (stainless-steel tables keep the quick-service feel), but it's clear the owners care about the ingredients. Using organic, grass-fed beef and sourcing from Long Beach farms whenever possible, HashTag proves you don't have to be some farm-to-table gastropub to take your burgers seriously.

Still, it's the restaurant's 30-ounce-burger challenge that's done the most to distinguish it from its veteran neighbor. If you eat the sumo-sized so-called "HashTag This" burger—six strips of bacon, eight onion rings, four fried eggs, a cup and a half of hash browns, a bowl of chili, eight slices of cheese, etc.—and drink 32 ounces of beer in less than 15 minutes, it's all free. So far, no one has accomplished the feat (the allotted time was recently increased from seven minutes to 15 to help out the hopeful), but that hasn't stopped the curious from stopping in and ordering from the list of more regular-human-sized half-pound burgers. When you pay at the register, you get to watch as each hand-formed patty of grass-fed beef is thrown on the grill along with sweating sweet onions and smashed roasted garlic. If you take the table service, though, you can instead watch whatever's playing on the mounted TVs until your burger arrives, which it will, fully formed with a pylon of stacked toppings:



SARAH BENNETT

LONG BEACH LUNCH » SARAH BENNETT

pastrami for the #BOBW (Best of Both Worlds), grilled jalapeños and guacamole for the Hot Mess, a fried egg on the herba-ceous turkey burger. Side orders include skin-on French fries, beer-battered onion rings, and the holy forkable grail of shrimp-and-cheese Bixby Fries.

With about a 20-minute wait per order, HashTag does not claim to make a fast-food burger like Dave's. It also doesn't try to beat Dave's less-than-\$5 price point. And it's not trying to capitalize on the nostalgia factor of a simple meat-and-bread operation. Even its back-to-basics "Old Fashion" burger features a dollop of garlic aioli, as if the chef can't help but add a pinch of contemporary to the classic. Because both Dave's and HashTag are so good at what they do, it's almost unfair to take sides in the Atlantic-and-Wardlow beef. Yet the mere fact that these two generationally separated eateries exist within earshot of each other shows that these kinds of decisions are going to be more common in Long Beach. This year, more than any other, the city saw a rash of restaurant openings, many of them with menus in stark contrast to those that have fed people here for decades. As Long Beach embraces the inevitable new-school, here's to hoping it never forgets the old.

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"MAYBE IF I DIG INTO MY JACKET
JUST A BIT DEEPER . . ."

COURTESY OF ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

A Life Adrift In *Manchester By the Sea*

Damon and Affleck offer timely election-season escapism in the form of existential dread

BY MATT COKER

It's written and directed by Kenneth Lonergan, the New York playwright who also wrote and directed the movies *Margaret* and *You Can Count on Me* and contributed to the *Analyze This* and *Gangs of New York* screenplays. *Manchester By the Sea* arrives in theaters with the help of the Massachusetts mafia (producer Matt Damon and star Casey Affleck's production company, the Affleck/Middleton Project).

Any notion that Affleck has been acting under the shadow of big brother Ben is obliterated by the leading man's Oscar-frontrunner performance in *Manchester By the Sea*, which the National Board of Review named the Best Film of the Year on Nov. 29. From what I've seen so far in 2016, I agree.

Affleck plays Lee Chandler, a Boston handyman who is hollowed out inside because of a horrific family tragedy that happened in the town that gives the movie its title. When his boat-captain brother Joe (Kyle Chandler) dies, Lee returns to the quaint New England fishing village to take care of family affairs. Lee soon learns that role has been greatly expanded because Joe left him the house, a strug-

gling boat business and guardianship of a 16-year-old son.

Ben Chandler (Lucas Hedges) is a typical know-it-all teenager with way more game than Lee, to whom the boy represents the dreams and lust for life the uncle has extinguished. There is serious and deserved talk about Best Supporting Actor consideration for Hedges, who expertly delivers light and emotional moments.

I'd be interested in getting my hands on Lonergan's script—not because I want to read the thing, but so I can see how many pages there are. There can't be as many as one would expect for a 137-minute running time because *Manchester By the Sea* is filled with many long stretches of little or no dialogue, as well as multiple passages and montages.

These are set to a most-eclectic collection of thunderous music, including Albinoni's Adagio in G Minor, two excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* and "I'm Beginning to See the Light" sung by the Ink Spots and Ella Fitzgerald. Lesley Barber's original score includes a soaring operatic piece sung a cappella by her daughter Jacoba.

But carrying the film is Affleck's sadsack stare and beaten-down body lan-

guage, which convey the daily dread he experiences merely existing in a one-room dump, the bonus to his minimum-wage paycheck for repairing the leaks, unclogging the toilets and shoveling the walks of tenants in four Boston buildings. It's a life Lee prefers to the one he is thrust into, which demands more responsibility and, most of all, returning to a town filled with the ghosts of his past.

The tragedy that produced Lee's nightmares make him a pariah in some corners of Manchester. Like writers of serial dramas from our current golden age of television (and cable and streaming), Lonergan seamlessly flips the story back and forth through time, leaving it up to the viewer to keep up.

The layers of the story build toward a brilliantly acted scene on a Manchester street where Lee happens to bump into his ex-wife, Randi (Michelle Williams, in yet another remarkable performance). Previously seen scorning her husband in a flashback that had her on a gurney being loaded into an ambulance, the remarried Randi now wants to lunch with her ex. "I don't have anything big to say," she begins, but the audience at this point in the film

knows how big it is that she is saying anything in a friendly manner to him. Each fumble the exchange that follows, but they cannot hide their pain, remorse and enduring love.

"There's nothing there," Lee finally says, which does not explain how he feels about Randi, but rather that he believes the capacity to love was sucked out of him.

Christ, I'm choking up writing this.

So, yes, if it's the feel-good hit of the winter you are after to cure your post-election blues, *Manchester By the Sea* ain't it. Fortunately, in theaters this weekend, you can experience the escapism of the Los Angeles love-letter musical *La La Land* (which also enjoys good buzz), the raunchy humor of *Office Party* or the rote horrors of *Friend Request*.

Then again, if you need something to release that good cry . . .

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

was written and directed by Kenneth Lonergan; and stars Casey Affleck, Kyle Chandler, Michelle Williams, Lucas Hedges, C.J. Wilson, Gretchen Mol and Matthew Broderick. Now playing countywide.

Where Are Our Woodward and Bernstein?

BY MATT COKER



COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

Burn Country. A former war journalist (Dominic Rains) settles in a small town in Northern California and takes a job with a local newspaper. *Port Theater*, 2905 E. Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar, (949) 723-6333. Thurs., Dec. 8. Call for times. \$18.

Spirited Away. Hayao Miyazaki won an Oscar for the fantasy that has Chihiro thinking she is on another boring trip with her parents before they stop at a village that is not all that it seems. *AMC Downtown Disney*, 1565 Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, (714) 776-2355; *AMC Orange 30*, 20 City Blvd. W., Orange, (714) 769-4288; *AMC Tustin Legacy at the District*, 2457 Park Ave., Tustin, (714) 258-7036; *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20*, 26701 Aliso Creek Rd., Aliso Viejo, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21*, 65 Fortune Dr., Irvine, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26*, 7501 E. Carson, Long Beach, (844) 462-7342; *www.FathomEvents.com*. Thurs., Dec. 8, 7 p.m. \$12.50.

Auntie Mame. This 1958 film won Golden Globes for Best Actress and Motion Picture-Musical or Comedy. *The Art Theatre*, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435. Thurs., Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. \$10.

Elle. Director Paul Verhoeven's debut in French cinema. *Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts*, Folino Theater, 283 N. Cypress St., Orange; *chapman.edu/dodge/*. Thurs., Dec. 8, 7 p.m. Free, but seating is first come, first served.

Destination Africa: Malawi. Dodge College students wrote, directed, filmed and edited short documentaries. *Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts*, Folino Theater; *chapman.edu/dodge/*. Fri., 7 p.m. Free, but seating is first come, first served.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show Holiday Special. A special Christ-

mas-themed presentation. *The Frida Cinema*, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana; *thefridacinema.org*. Fri. Preshow, 11:30 p.m.; screening, midnight. \$8-\$10.

The Polar Express. Robert Zemeckis' 2004 computer-animated chestnut, based on Chris Van Allsburg's book. *Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center*, 241 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 956-8936. Sat., 9 a.m. \$10-\$15.

Elvira's Haunted Hills. After the Mistress of the Dark gets kicked out of a Carpathia inn in 1851, locals take Elvira to a castle high above the village, where her resemblance to the count's missing wife stirs up trouble. *The Frida Cinema*; *thefridacinema.org*. Sat., 10 p.m. \$8-\$10.

L'Amour de Loin (Love From Afar). *Fathom Events* and *The Met: Live in HD* broadcast Kaija Saariaho's yearning medieval romance. *AMC Orange 30*, (714) 769-4288; *AMC Tustin Legacy at the District*, (714) 258-7036; *Cinemark Century Stadium 25*, 1701 W. Katella Ave., Orange, (714) 532-9558; *Cinemark Century 20 Huntington Beach*, 7777 Edinger Ave., Huntington Beach, (714) 373-4573; *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26*, (844) 462-7342; *www.FathomEvents.com*. Sun., 9:55 a.m. \$20-\$26.

All the President's Men + State of Journalism Discussion. See the 1976 film about the Watergate investigation by the *Washington Post*, then hang around for a discussion on how American journalism has changed. *The Art Theatre*, (562) 438-5435. Sun., 10:30 a.m. Free.

The Nutcracker. Bolshoi Ballet presents the holiday dance classic. *Regency Directors Cut Cinema at Rancho Niguel*, 25471 Rancho Niguel Rd., Laguna Niguel, (949) 831-0446; *Regency South Coast Village*, 1561 W.

Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701. Sun., 12:55 p.m.; Tues., 7 p.m. \$4.50-\$10.50.

From Here to Eternity. The winner of eight Oscars in 1953, including Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor (Frank Sinatra) and Best Supporting Actress (Donna Reed). *AMC Orange 30*, (714) 769-4288; *Cinemark Century Stadium 25*, (714) 532-9558; *Cinemark Century 20 Huntington Beach*, (714) 373-4573; *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26*, (844) 462-7342; *www.FathomEvents.com*. Sun. & Wed., 2 & 7 p.m. \$9.25-\$12.

Finding Joseph I. (See "Into the Mind of Bad Brains," page 26.) *The Art Theatre*, (562) 438-5435. Sun., 9 p.m. \$8-\$11.

The Rolling Stones Olé Olé Olé! A Trip Across Latin America. This documentary that follows the world's greatest rock & roll band during its early-2016, 10-city Latin America tour. *AMC Orange 30*, (714) 769-4288; *Cinemark Century 20 Huntington Beach*, (714) 373-4573; *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26*, (844) 462-7342; *www.FathomEvents.com*. Mon., 8 p.m. \$13-\$15.

White Christmas. This 1954 rom-com is a fun-filled musical extravaganza. *Regency Directors Cut Cinema at Rancho Niguel*, (949) 831-0446. Tues. Call for time. \$8.

George Takei's Allegiance: The Broadway Musical On the Big Screen. Inspired by the true-life experiences of *Star Trek*'s George Takei is this musical about a family whose life is upended by the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. *AMC Orange 30*, (714) 769-4288; *Cinemark Century Stadium 25*, (714) 532-9558; *Cinemark Century 20 Huntington Beach*, (714) 373-4573; *Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Irvine Spectrum 21*, (844) 462-7342; *Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26*, (844) 462-7342; *www.FathomEvents.com*. Tues., 7:30 p.m. \$18-\$20.

Scrooge. The Cinema Classics series continues with this 1970 holiday chestnut about a stingy old man visited by three ghosts who teach him the reason for the holiday season. *Starlight Cinema City*, 5635 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, (714) 970-6700; *starlightcinemas.com*. Wed., 7 p.m. \$7.

National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation. The Griswolds prepare for a

family seasonal celebration, but things never run smoothly for this family. *Regency South Coast Village*, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. \$9.

Just Friends. A decade after being dismissed by Jamie, Chris still pines for her. *Fullerton Main Library*, *Osborne Auditorium, Room B*, 353 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738.6327. Thurs., Dec. 15, 1 p.m. Free.

The World Has No Eyedea: A Film About Michael "Eyedea" Larsen. Brandon Crowson's exploration of the life and death of freestyle rapper/guitarist/breakdancer/poet/philosopher

Michael "Eyedea" Larsen. *The Frida Cinema*; *thefridacinema.org*. Thurs., Dec. 15, 8 p.m. \$7-\$10.

Made In Venice. Forty-plus years of skateboarding in Venice—from the formation of the iconic Z-Boys to the creation of the iconic Venice Skatepark—are captured in Jonathan Penson's new documentary. Turns out becoming an iconic Venice skateboarder was easier than opening a skatepark there. *The Art Theatre*, (562) 438-5435. Thurs., Dec. 15, 8:30 p.m. \$8-\$11.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

Art In the Balance

Great Park Gallery's all-over-the-place exhibition grows on you

BY DAVE BARTON

It's almost tempting to say the Great Park Gallery's latest show, "Balance," is the perfect exhibition for these troubled, out-of-balance times. According to the press release, it's about the "evolving relationship between nature and humanity," but from the outset it's not at all clear that that is what you're seeing. Laid out with care and thought by curator Kevin Staniec, what initially feels conceptually thin will grow on you, despite some missteps and filler, taking you to an altogether different place than what the PR poofery might suggest. It's only after the fact that you'll see how all these pieces are interconnected.

Our complicated history with the earth is the story behind Vaughn Bell's low-key *Pocket Biosphere*. She has sealed bits of earth in wobbly, recyclable plastic containers. The idea is that you pick up one of the containers, after filling out "adoption" paperwork nearby, promising to take responsibility for your bit of terra firma, and take it home. It's a libertarian conceit: You own it, so you do with it as you please—you can nurture it or pitch it in a bin, and no one would know—and a sweet symbol for both ecological preservation and the casual disregard with which we treat our surroundings. Likewise, Esther Traugot's 25 arboretum seed types, each wearing a tiny mustard-yellow sweater, also seems a potentially twee idea for an art project, but looking at them brings to mind protective mothers, the artist a literalized Mother Nature, making sure her "children" are dressed warmly, protected from the elements. Placed under bell jars, the glassware does double duty, lending the pieces respect as something scientific and living, but also focusing our attention on them as objets d'art.

The four geometric pieces by local artist Andre Woodward, gray concrete blocks balanced by wire hanging from a cat's cradle of metal supports, is the least subtle work in the show. Sprouting from each gray square is a tree branch, but the block isn't cracked, with nature forcing its way through an urban landscape; the concrete fits tightly around the branch or stalk, trapping and suffocating it. Intentionally rickety, there's the feeling that one wrong move may take the whole thing down, but that obviousness short-cuts moving us to look at things in a new way and, instead, just nudges us on to the next part of the exhibition.

In the age of tiny houses, the novelty of Jedediah Corwyn Voltz's miniature treehouses (erected next to houseplants) will bring a smile, the simple furnishings—beds, rugs, petite paintings—all



HONEY, I SHRUNK THE TREEHOUSE

DAVE BARTON

handcrafted from scraps of wood, plastic and fabric. Ignoring any sort of architectural reality—skimpy ladders connect the precarious levels of each house, alongside watermill wheels that dwarf the buildings—the sculptures are nice to look at, especially inside the well-chosen environmental planters, but they're the kind of thing one admires for the amount of time put into the effort and little else.

The handful of photographs of various art sculptures amid the natural surroundings at Storm King Art Center are documentary, not always even good shots of the work, and while the New York center may be thoughtful about where it places public sculptures on its vast acreage, the photos don't overtly have much to do with balance. In fact, they look as if they're there only because the gallery had a spare wall that needed covering.

In contrast, photographer and journalist Marissa Gawel's mixed-media installation, taken from her "American Attraction" series, spans an entire wall of the gallery. Her travels to small museums, many located in people's homes throughout America's heartland—a jagged, red-string cardiogram pinned from map to title card to photographs tracing the journey—is the show's highlight. Most of the places she visits are where individuals have obsessive/compulsive relationships with their hoarded collections and, however clumsily, have created businesses, a

place for their stuff and a community. The rotting carcasses of automobiles collect rust in Old Car City; there's Tennessee's Salt & Pepper Shaker Museum; Fouke Monster Mart, accompanied by a pizza shop, celebrating Arkansas' swamp creature/folk hero popularized in *The Legend of Boggy Creek* movies; there's the Birdhouse Paradise of Bill Larkin, featuring almost 4,000 bird homes.

There's no sneering at the yokel here; just a journalist's love for the eccentric and an appreciation for the stories of people outside the mainstream. Gawel has photographed the owners or their places with a sharp eye for the intriguing detail and included QR scan codes, allowing you to hear short smartphone interviews with the individuals involved about the places they love. If the smile on the co-founder of MBAD African Bead Museum in Detroit is any indication, it's the only serious way to find happiness in the world, as well as the real theme of the show: surrounding yourself with the art and history that you love, then inviting people, especially strangers, to come in and partake, is our "nature"—and the surest, most highly evolved way to get in touch with our humanity.

"BALANCE"

at Great Park Gallery, Palm Court Arts Complex, Irvine, (949) 724-6880; www.ocgp.org. Open Thurs.-Fri., noon-4 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Through Feb. 19, 2017. Free.

TRENDZILLA

» AIMEE MURILLO

Nouveau Squeaky Toys

Kate Hart peddled retro toys for years before finally creating her own, with a familiar aesthetic. Hart's creations, Bittersqueaks, are made from molds circa the 1950s and '60s that she acquired from the son of iconic toymaker Edward Mobley. After tracking down Mobley's family in Ohio, she has sold via her Etsy page (www.etsy.com/shop/katehartxoxo) original Mobley rubber squeak toys, as well as her own, customized and accented with a punchy pink color palette that would make Lisa Frank proud.

The Seal Beach-based Hart has only been making the toys for a short while, but she has already built a solid fan base, among them pop artist Gary Baseman. While Hart's versions do maintain some faithfulness to Mobley's original designs (Bittersqueak toys are also made of rubber and use cloth for animal ears), these toys are clearly more geared for people older than toddler age. To date, Hart's toy output includes an artist-collaborated series of rubber teddy bears painted by creepy-cute doll maker Sheri Debow and surrealist painter Squid Vishuss (Debow's painted bears glow in the dark!); a line of "dino-kitties," long-necked cats designed with pop surrealist painter Mab Graves; and a scented, hot-pink wiener dog that was also painted by Graves. There are even enamel pins made to resemble vintage Mobley toys.

Hart, who lives and breathes vintage, finds a strange kinship with Mobley's toys. "They just have such cute faces," Hart says. "Hopefully, they inspire other people to paint cute. The art world doesn't have to be so dark and moody—I like it that way for sure, but it can also be super-sunshine-y and cute and a little bit creepy."

The only tragedy? Bittersqueak toys are made in criminally limited numbers due to manufacturing costs, but you can check the Instagram (@bittersqueaks) for new releases, updates and news on future appearances.

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Into the Mind of Bad Brains

New doc on D.C. hardcore's iconic front man digs deep and delivers
BY NATE JACKSON

The man who made a reputation through Jah-powered hardcore and back-flipping, fireball charisma is just one of the personalities inhabiting the mind of Paul "HR" Hudson. Even the most die-hard fans of D.C. hardcore icons Bad Brains admit they haven't seen that version of the legendary lead singer in decades. At age 60, the snarling attitude and operatic wails on tracks such as "Sailin' On" and "I Against I" aren't part of Hudson's persona anymore.

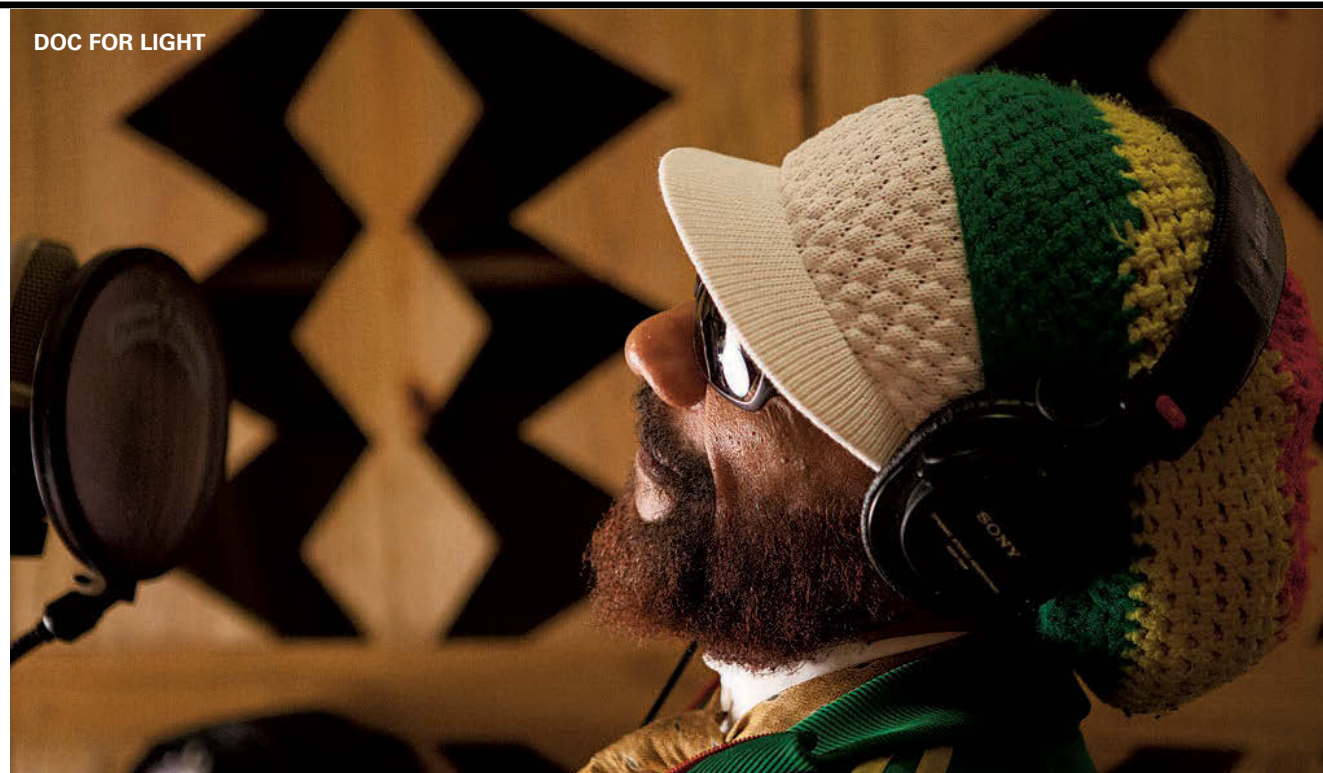
These days, he goes by his Rastafarian name, Joseph I. But his message of PMA (positive mental attitude) remains the same, even when his mind was the very thing causing him anguish. For years, Hudson has suffered from severe recurring headaches and schizophrenia.

Since James Lathos started his documentary on Hudson nearly a decade ago, he has witnessed just about all of the singer's multiple personalities. After digging through Hudson's triumphant and tumultuous past, as well as the darkness and light of his mental illness, Lathos emerged with a story of the front man that has never been told. From the first shot to the final edit, *Finding Joseph I* took Lathos and Hudson on a long, very unexpected journey. "It wasn't like I was trying to do a documentary," Lathos says. "It was just a natural, gradual process. I didn't get to shoot very much with him, compared to all the time I actually spent with him."

The two met in the winter of 2007 when Lathos did an interview with Hudson for the pool-skating publication *Concussion Magazine*. After a brief discussion, they discovered they lived in the same area of Baltimore, and Hudson agreed to let the director into his world. A longtime fan of the band, Lathos was shocked by the singer's destitute lifestyle. At the time, Hudson was living in an abandoned warehouse, barely getting by while struggling with his mental illness.

Lathos was inspired to discover the person who Hudson was and the psychological issues that started his unraveling around his late 30s. "I'd say it took a lot of courage for me to get into that realm," Lathos says. "But I think Joe appreciated the truthfulness of what was happening at the time. It's a really thin line to walk; it's a line of madness."

The director pieced together original interviews of rock stars such as Eric Wilson of Sublime, Chino Moreno of the Deftones, and Duff McKagan of Guns N' Roses, all praising Hudson's greatness, but he also drew a portrait of the man few people really knew. Prior to becoming HR (short for "Hunting Rod" and, later,



DOC FOR LIGHT

JEFF SCHMALE

"Human Rights"), Hudson was a military brat who'd bounced from state to state with his brother Earl, Bad Brains' drummer. They also lived in Jamaica for a short time before the family settled in Capitol Heights, Maryland. His parents, both still alive and happily married, raised a boy who started out as a college-bound star athlete. "I was more interested in sports and going off to college to be a pre-med student," Hudson says. "Then, one day, I heard about the Dead Boys and the Sex Pistols, and a friend exposed them to me. It was just simple chords. It was easy to play."

Through Lathos' interviews with Earl and HR's childhood friends, we see the sonic brotherhood that inspired countless musicians. Despite Bad Brains' massive importance to punk rock, the documentary points out how much bigger the band could've—and should've—been. Throughout the mid-1980s and early '90s, major-label deals, big-time producers and opening-act slots for the likes of U2 sort of fell into their laps after years of scraping to make a name for themselves. But Hudson's issues—both psychological and ego-driven—seemed to derail the band's opportunities, with him not showing up for gigs and botching important deals, torpedoing the band's chances for major success.

Bassist Darryl Jenifer and guitarist Gary "Dr. Know" Miller declined to be part of Lathos' documentary. But Earl and the Brains' longtime manager, Anthony

Countey, appear numerous times—though Lathos says it took years of convincing. "A lot of people are apprehensive about talking about him," Lathos says. "Imagine creating this beautiful art with your brothers, and you have an opportunity to feed your family, and that's all you know how to do. And everything's lying in the hands of H.R. That's a crazy place to be."

Despite Hudson's eccentricities, the more time Lathos spent with Hudson, the more he was committed to making *Finding Joseph I*. The independent film had virtually no budget, requiring Lathos to campaign on Kickstarter to raise the majority of the funding, bringing in more than \$40,000 for a sharp and dedicated crew of videographers and professionals to help. Long Beach musician Miguel Hapoldt, who was also interviewed for the film, was tapped to score it.

As the founder of legendary Long Beach label Skunk Records and a former member of Sublime and Long Beach Dub All-Stars, Hapoldt not only idolized Hudson, but also shared the stage with him several times as a member of Hudson's backing band during his solo stints. Most of the music for *Finding Joseph I* was cannibalized from sessions he'd produced for a solo album by the late Aaron Owens of Hepcat. Recorded over several years before Owens' death from congestive heart failure last year, the music was a testament to the impact the Brains had on Long Beach music. "I know if Aaron were alive today,

he'd be telling me to use that shit," Hapoldt says. "We had all these half-finished songs, and had the album come out, it really would've been great. But it was cool for me to honor Aaron and HR at the same time by getting some of this material out."

Lathos says the time he spent with Hudson made them true soul brothers. Hudson even became godfather to Lathos' son Jordan Joseph. "He's stable now; he's doing better. The fact that he asked for help and is working on trying to live a better life and deal with his issues and stuff, there's a lot of redemption in that," Lathos says. "No matter what happens with the movie, we'll always be family."

Even though this kind of long-term project is something he says he'll probably never do again, he's glad he did, if only to finally give a living legend his due. And after seeing the finished *Finding Joseph I*, Hudson couldn't agree more. "It was effective at showing the real me," Hudson says. "Most of all, I want people to know I was a good man—out of all that, everything that was done, I wanted people to know that I was good."

NJACKSON@OCWEEKLY.COM

FINDING JOSEPH I

premieres, followed by a Q&A with director James Lathos and H.R. Hudson, at the Long Beach Art Theater, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435; www.arttheaterlongbeach.com. Sun., 9 p.m. \$11; seniors/children, \$8.



MINDSTREAM STUDIO

Noob Tube

Mindstream Studio set to become YouTube's paradise
BY YVONNE VILLASEÑOR

Have you ever spent a solid two hours watching the most bizarre and pointless videos, then asked yourself, "Why am I watching this? How did I get here?" YouTube has had the masses glued to their laptop screen or mobile devices wondering the same thing since its launch in 2005. In an accelerating technological age, YouTube has become a medium that average Joes, celebrities and companies alike use to brand themselves. And Orange County's newest production house, Mindstream Studio, can help make your dream of YouTube stardom come true.

The multichannel network (MCN) and digital production house is considered the world's first crowdfunded YouTube studio. Its 7,200-square-foot space in Irvine will be open to the public in March 2017. At Mindstream Studio, creators have access to an editing lab, creative services, sales, staging areas, green screens and five themed studio sets—including those for beauty/lifestyle, vlogging/entertainment, tech and gadget, gaming, and food (with a full kitchen!), all of which can be rented for half a day or a full day.

Don't know how to film or edit, or you just don't have the necessary equipment? Not a problem. You can have the in-house creative team film and edit your content for you. "That's really the vision behind Mindstream Studio: to create a really cool place where people in Orange County can get all the services, the support, as well as all the custom studios," says founder and executive producer Mark Thimmig.

Mindstream Studio also has its own channel on YouTube, hosting two shows (*Crowdfunding Voice*, *The Crowd Gadget*

Show) and picking up more than 6,000 subscribers and hundreds of thousands of views within two months.

Because Google owns YouTube, users have a higher Google-search standing if they share videos. It has also been proven that if people incorporate video into their social media, they get anywhere from 10 to 1,000 times more engagement from viewers compared to a basic text post.

So far, an average of two to five aspiring YouTubers apply via Mindstream's website (mindstreamstudio.com) per day for a chance to be the next Jenna Marbles or PewDiePie. From that pool of people, Thimmig will determine who will earn a contract. Each contract is for a specific amount of time and includes a dashboard consisting of descriptive analytics, custom integration and a list of what's trending on YouTube. Creators will have 100 percent ownership, as well as 100 percent of the money, of their content.

Mindstream Studio will also help creators gain access to big-name brands and sponsors to make even more money. Any copied content from other users will be taken down to ensure the material remains original. These benefits are vital to creators, especially during the technological revolution our society is in.

"I just feel really blessed to lead an organization with a bunch of young people who are super-creative," Thimmig says. "It's fun for me because I get to see something even better than I imagine come to light, and it's fun for them because they get to use their full, creative talent and not feel constrained."

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music»

West Side Realness

“What the fuck they know about the kid from the west side of the river bed?” asks SanTana’s Jay Taj on “Never Die,” a track off his latest project, which sounds as if Kendrick Lamar’s *Good Kid, M.A.A.D City* took place in Orange County’s toughest city rather than Compton. That project, *Tenfour*—a chronicle of life, love, stress and setbacks as a kid trying to stay pure—is Taj’s most comprehensive in his 11-year career and a great introduction to a local rapper who never let his bleak surroundings destroy him.

For the 25-year-old whose real name is Gerard Tajalle Jr., music has been an escape since he was 14. His freestyle songwriting method is influenced by J-Cole, Kanye West, Black Thought of the Roots and, of course, Kendrick Lamar, but Taj brings a polished, conscious voice to a county that otherwise ignores its own rugged edges.

Dodging violence was routine for Taj while growing up off McFadden and Newhope in SanTana. “My brother-in-law was murdered on First and Gunther, which is right on the other side of the river bed,” he says. “This is my home, and I wanted to talk about this place you guys never really touch on.”

While Taj reps SanTana heavily, he’s trying to take his music beyond the county. “When you go to LA and someone’s like, ‘Where are you from?’ I never say Orange County,” he says. “Unfortunately, if I say Orange County, I immediately get typecasted. So, I’m like, ‘I’m from Santa Ana,’ and it took a long time for people to be like, ‘Oh, I fuck with Santa Ana.’”

Aside from rapping, Taj devotes his time to teaching music, video and photography production to the kids of the Boys & Girls Club of Garden Grove. The Hope and Opportunity through Performance and Entertainment (HOPE) program gives participants the opportunity to record, under Taj’s guidance, in a professional studio for free. He also produces his own artwork and videos, plays the keys and drums. Taj previously worked on DJ Skee’s SKEE TV and now hosts two internet radio shows on Dash Radio. “I’m a master of none, but I’m definitely capable of many things,” Taj says of his jack-of-all-arts ways.

While Taj stays busy creatively, he has also made giving back to his community a top priority.



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“Everybody knows [SanTana] means everything to me,” he says. “Within the county, I just wish people would stop faking the funk and stop acting like we’re better than we are.” Instead, Taj says, we need to love our neighbors now more than ever.

“The only thing we were born with in this life is love; that’s the only thing we knew from the jump . . . and the only thing we have left is love, just love,” he says. “I think that’s something that always has to be remembered. This music shit is not what I do it for; I do it to inspire love.”

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sex»

Husbandry

I'm a 37-year-old gay man who just got out of an abusive relationship. We were together five years, moved to Portland together, got married three years ago, yada, yada, yada. He suffered a traumatic injury earlier this year, which led to PTSD, which led to a nervous breakdown, which led to our savings being depleted, which led him to leave me in October. He moved back to the other side of the country, and I'm broke and on my own in a strange city. I saw your dirty film festival when it played here, and it made me realize something: At my age, I should still be enjoying myself and evolving sexually. I was unhappy in my marriage for the last two years, but sexually, I was unhappy for a long time. Recently, I had a decent one-night stand. It was a drunken, stoned hot mess, but it got the job done—and there was no guilt on my part, which to me signifies that it really is over with my ex. But I can't help feeling like I'm starting over. Not just dating, but starting over with my sex life and my writing. My ex had me switch from LGBT media—which I am very good at—to copywriting, which sucks but is "steadier." The point is: I want so much sexually because I've been starved physically and psychologically, but I don't know where to begin. I feel like my marriage eviscerated me sexually. Not just the sex part of it, but the parts of my homosexuality that felt important to my personality, not just my turn-ons. Help.

Grieving And Yearning Man Asking Nicely

You're not too old to enjoy yourself and evolve sexually, GAYMAN—you're never too old to enjoy yourself or evolve, sexually or otherwise. But it takes time to bounce back after a committed LTR ends traumatically. So don't rush yourself. But as soon as you can—sooner than perhaps it feels right—you'll need to get out there. You'll need to actively and intentionally reconnect to your homosexuality and the ways in which it shaped and continues to inform your personality, your perspective and your joy.

And now some random tips...

I'm not being look-ist or body-fascist here—this isn't about having Instagrammable abs or the best torso on Grindr—but join a gym, GAYMAN. Or take up a sport that kicks your ass, cardio-wise. Forcing your body to outrun your brain is a good way to get back in touch with yourself physically, emotionally and sexually. And exercising—again, I'm not talking abs here—is good for us. It's a natural antidepressant. It gets blood pumping into our extremities. (Your dick is an extremity.) And it gets us out of our heads. It also creates a social space, if you do it regularly, where you can make friends and connections without booze or drugs or the scourge of dance music.

If the gym isn't for you, ride a bike. If biking isn't for you, run. If running isn't for you, walk. Just get your ass moving.

Go volunteer somewhere, anywhere. Like someone or other once said, it's hard to feel sorry for yourself when you're making yourself useful. Go volunteer at the ACLU or Planned Parenthood, do some copywriting for an LGBT civil-rights organization, find out what orgs are working with immigrants in your community and ask them what kind of help they need.

Please don't succumb to meth or any of the other stupid drugs. Pot and alcohol—in moderation—aren't stupid drugs.

Reach out to friends you lost touch with over the past five years, apologize for letting these relationships go, and ask if they'd like to reconnect. Not all will, GAYMAN—some might be too angry to reconnect right now (you may hear from them later), some might not have any extra friendship bandwidth right now (ditto). Focus on friends who want to reconnect, and don't be bitter about friends who don't.

Masturbate. A lot. And don't use porn every time—try using your imagination, flip through the ol' solodex. Be open to new experiences. Ask yourself where you've always wanted to go. Pick a big gay

SAVAGELOVE

» DAN SAVAGE

event you've always wanted to attend—gay days at Disneyland, International Mr. Leather in Chicago, the World Series of Beer Pong in Las Vegas—and start setting money aside so you'll have that trip to look forward to.

Good luck, GAYMAN.

I'm a 44-year-old married gay male. I recently found out my 30-year-old husband has been sending dick pics to randoms on Grindr. He says he doesn't remember who he sent pics to or why, other than I was working late and he was drunk and pissed at me. I want to be mature about this, but I'm really hurt. We've been together more than four years and married six months. We have a closed, monogamous relationship. He says he's been faithful, and I believe him. I'm struggling to trust him, however. Am I overreacting?

Help Understanding Relationship Trauma

Which would you rather have, HURT: This particular husband (a.k.a. the man you married) or a husband (a generic husband) who wouldn't, couldn't and didn't send dick pics to randoms on Grindr? Given a choice between a perfect, flawless, blameless but *imaginary* husband and the imperfect, flawed, living, breathing husband you've got, which would you pick?

Personally, I recommend choosing actual-and-flawed husbands over perfect-and-imaginary ones. (I'm not telling you to do anything I haven't done and that my own husband hasn't done.)

With that said, HURT, and hopefully with that choice made, your husband needs to drop the "I was mad at you for working late" bullshit and take responsibility for his actions. Drunk may have played a role, as booze is the great disinhibitor, but swapping dick pics isn't something reasonable dick-having people do in response to run-of-the-mill annoyances. Your husband sent those pics because he enjoys showing off the goods. Your husband has an exhibitionistic streak.

So what to do about it? You could forbid it, HURT, but creating a little space in our marriages for pleasures we may not share or fully understand—making accommodations instead of issuing threats—can make our marriages stronger, not weaker, less contentious and therefore less brittle. If swapping pics makes your husband feel desirable and he plows that sexual energy into you... not only aren't you being betrayed, but you're also benefiting.

If I were you, HURT, I would grant him this small zone of erotic autonomy.

I'm a Canadian gay man, married eight years to a man with a thing for men spitting in his face. It's a degradation thing (of course), and I would do it for him, but it can't be me. It can't be someone he loves, someone who loves him; it has to be someone he doesn't know, someone who regards him with contempt. He finds guys to do this for him on the hookup apps, and I don't have a problem with it. I do have a problem leaning in for a kiss when his face reeks of some other man's spit. He likes the "lingering scent"—I do not. He says I'm kink-shaming him when I recoil and ask him to go wash his face. He's agreed to abide by your ruling, Dan. Should he wash his damn face?

Smelling Patooley Irks This Spouse

You've accommodated your husband's kink. He needs to return the favor and accommodate your nose. He should wash his damn face—and get his damn flu shot.

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Contact Dan via email at mail@savagelove.net, and follow him on Twitter: @fakedansavage.

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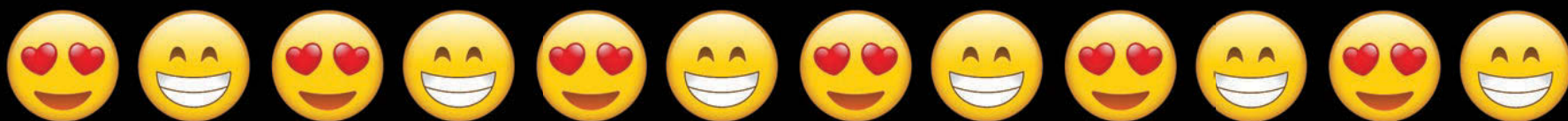
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